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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

18 April 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: The President
The White House

Attached is a memorandum covering the subject of Soviet arrivals in Cuba since February, when the withdrawals began.

The conclusion of our analysis to date is that only a small number--less than 150--of Soviet personnel have arrived in Cuba, while at least 4,600 have departed.


John A. McCone
Director

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Cuba Intelligence

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
18 April 1963

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Reports of Arrival of Soviet Military Personnel in Cuba

1. During the past two months, in which we have evidence that at least 4,600 Soviet personnel have been withdrawn from Cuba, we have only two cases of reported arrival of military personnel where the evidence is firm. They involve a total of less than 150 men.

2. The freighter Tsimlyanskges arrived in Havana on 20 March. On the preceding day, the pilot of a US Navy reconnaissance aircraft reported that when he approached the ship, 50 to 70 husky men sunbathing on deck broke for cover as if to avoid surveillance. The following day, British Embassy reports from Havana noted that about 60 Soviet personnel had been observed unloading trucks at Santiago de las Vegas under circumstances suggesting they were new arrivals.

3. British observers saw about 50 passengers disembarking from the Mikhail Kalinin on 4 April about four hours after arrival in Havana, with evidence indicating they were newly arrived military personnel.

4. In three other cases, intercepts have described small groups of inbound passengers--50 or less--as replacement crews for trawlers, and we have no evidence suggesting they were not.

5. Altogether we have only about 10 other agent-refugee reports during this period of Soviet arrivals, and most of these are demonstrably false.

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One, for example, cited arrival of "several thousand" Soviet troops aboard two freighters which could not have carried a fraction of this number.

6. The only one of these reports which we cannot disprove or discount is an independent and unsubstantiated report that a passenger ship arriving in Havana on 18 February disembarked 600 Soviets. There is no corroboration, although the disembarkation is supposed to have taken place in daylight hours. It appears extremely unlikely that if it had in fact occurred as described, there would not have been other substantiating reports.

7. The latest passenger ship arrival, the Maria Ulyanova which reached Havana at 0730 on 17 April, declared no passengers in transiting the Kiel Canal, was not seen to have passengers by naval surveillance near Cuba, and was not seen to disembark any by Western observers in Havana.

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